

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

6 June 1988

Jordan: Tilting Toward Moscow? [REDACTED]

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Summary

Strains in Jordan's relations with the United States, coupled with Soviet efforts to improve ties, have pushed Amman closer to Moscow during the last few months. King Hussein remains deeply suspicious of Soviet intentions, but he probably will place greater reliance on the USSR as an arms supplier if efforts to obtain new fighter aircraft from France and the United Kingdom fall through. If Jordan's dependence on Moscow for arms grows, it will become more difficult for King Hussein to limit Soviet influence with the Jordanian officer corps and to resist Soviet pressure in favor of giving the PLO a major role in future Arab-Israeli peace negotiations. [REDACTED]

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This memorandum was prepared by [REDACTED] Israel-Jordan-PLO Branch, Arab-Israeli Division, Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis. Comments and queries are welcome and should be addressed to the Chief, Arab-Israeli Division [REDACTED]

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Jordanian-US Relations

US relations with Jordan have been deteriorating since 1984 when Congress rejected the sale of F-16 fighters to Amman. During the past four years, Jordanian arms purchases from the United States, US military assistance, and contact between the two militaries have declined (see Table 1). Although King Hussein appreciated US support to Jordanian efforts to acquire late-model West European fighter aircraft, the US

[redacted] were irritated by what they saw as US footdragging in approving the sale of British Tornado aircraft, which contain US components. [redacted]

Jordan publicly has welcomed US efforts to move the peace process forward, but King Hussein is distressed by what he judges to be the strongly pro-Israel bias in US policy. During Secretary of State Shultz's visit to Amman in early April, [redacted] Jordanian television was forbidden to broadcast Secretary Shultz's press interview because it allegedly contained views supportive of Israel. In addition, we believe that the King became personally irritated by Secretary Shultz's forceful advocacy of positions judged to be favorable to Israel. [redacted]

Jordanian ties with the United States were strained further on the 40th anniversary of the founding of Israel in late April, when Tel Aviv and Washington concluded a "Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Joint Political, Security, and Economic Cooperation." Although the agreement did little more than draw together and reaffirm a number of separate understandings between the United States and Israel, it referred to Israel as a major non-NATO ally of the US. Coming less than a week after the Israelis were widely suspected of assassinating PLO Deputy Abu Jihad, the signing of the MOA was galling to the King. In order to underscore his ire, [redacted] Hussein has decided to delay sending a new Jordanian Ambassador to Washington until after the US presidential election. [redacted]

Jordan-Soviet Relations

As relations with the United States have cooled, Jordan has looked increasingly to the USSR for arms (see Table 2). In the early 1980s, the Jordanians began to purchase Soviet tactical air defense equipment, but over the last few years Amman has lengthened the list of equipment it has sought from Moscow. The Soviets made the Jordanians a good offer last year for MIG-29 fighters, but [redacted] the deal foundered in early 1988 over disagreements about the specifications of the aircraft and objections from Damascus. Syria began to receive MIG-29s in 1987, and the Syrians want to maintain military superiority over the Jordanians. [redacted]

Despite the collapse of the MIG-29 deal, Jordanian and Soviet arms discussions have increased. In January, [redacted] the Soviets offered the Jordanians 200 T-80 tanks and invited Amman to send a team of armor experts to the USSR in February to inspect the vehicle, which the Soviets have not exported. That same month, the Chief of Soviet Artillery and Rocket Troops visited Jordan and, [redacted] likely discussed the delivery of new artillery. In April, [redacted] King Hussein had decided to buy 100 Soviet BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles instead of accepting a British offer to sell an equal number of MCV-80 IFVs. [redacted] the Jordanians and Soviets in early May began to construct a repair facility in Jordan to overhaul Soviet-supplied ground forces equipment. [redacted]

Jordan and the USSR also have begun to grope toward broader political and security cooperation. During a visit to the USSR in late December 1987--his first in five years--King Hussein concluded several bilateral agreements to improve cultural and economic ties with Moscow, [redacted] and he urged the Soviets to do more to promote an international conference on Middle East peace. [redacted] however, that the King denied a Soviet request in January to establish a military mission in

Jordan. In May, the US Embassy in Amman reported that Ambassador-at-Large Mikhail Sytenko called on senior Jordanian officials to discuss, among other things, a possible visit by Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, which could occur in June after the US-Soviet summit and would focus on the summit discussions of the peace process. [REDACTED]

Outlook

King Hussein and his military leadership are largely western-trained and oriented and are worried about expanding ties to the Soviets.

Although the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] equipment is comparable to Western gear, they believe that Soviet doctrine and tactics produce poor results. The Jordanians would prefer to continue working closely with Western, particularly US, military services, but the task of obtaining and financing modern Western military equipment is becoming more difficult. With the recent arrival of the Firefinder counterbattery radar, the US Embassy in Amman notes that the delivery of new US military equipment under existing contracts has ended. [REDACTED]

Although Jordan has reached a tentative agreement with the British to purchase eight Tornados and has signed a contract with the French to buy 12 Mirage 2000s with an option to purchase eight more, neither deal is certain. Both countries have been liberal in extending credit to Amman, but the deals still depend upon Saudi Arabian financial assistance to Jordan. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] a French bank official recently stressed this point and noted that if the Jordanians do not make a down payment by 20 June, the deal will fall through. The collapse of the Mirage 2000 deal might lead Amman to reconsider the MIG-29 which, like the French fighter, is well suited for air defense missions. [REDACTED]

If the Jordanians purchase such major items of Soviet arms as MIG-29 fighters, the number of Soviet advisers and technicians would inevitably increase, and it would be harder for King Hussein to prevent the Soviets from gaining influence with the Jordanian officer

corps. Moreover, as Amman's reliance on the USSR for arms increases, it would be harder for the King to resist Soviet political blandishments, and more difficult for Jordan to participate effectively in the peace process in light of Soviet pressure to assure the PLO a major role in future Arab-Israeli peace talks. For progress to be made, most observers believe Israel will continue to demand that the Jordanians represent the Palestinians in a nominally joint non-PLO Palestinian delegation. The more Jordan appears to be tilting toward the Soviets, however, the easier it will be for Israeli hardliners to resist entering active peace negotiations. [REDACTED]

Table 1**US Assistance to Jordan, 1982-1988a**

(Millions US\$)

<u>FISCAL YEAR</u> ¹	<u>FMS</u>	<u>MAP</u>	<u>ESF</u>
1982	54.9	0	15.0
1983	51.5	0	20.0
1984	115.0	0	20.0
1985	90.0	0	20.0
1986	81.6	0	14.9
1987	0	39.9	21.0
1988	0	26.5	18.0

^a Budget Authority¹ Ending 30 September of Indicated Year

Table 2**Major Items of Soviet Military Equipment
Delivered to Jordan, 1982-1987**

ZSU-23-4	Antiaircraft Artillery Pieces	48
SA-8	Tactical Air Defense Missile Launchers Missiles	44 1056
SA-13	Tactical Air Defense Missile Launchers Missiles	30 592
SA-14	Man-portable Missile Launchers	436
BTR-60	Armored Personnel Carriers and Command Vehicles	20
BMP-2	Infantry fighting Vehicles	49

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- 1 - Edward W. Gnehm, Jr. OSD/ISA
- 1 - LTC John Miller OSD/ISA
- 1 - Vicki Howard OSD/ISA
- 1 - George Malleck State/NE
- 1 - Robert McMahon State/PM
- 1 - Leon Weintraub State/INR

Internal

- 2 - DIR/DCI/DDCI Exec Staff (1-EA/DCI, 1-EA/DDCI)
- 1 - DDI
- 1 - ADDI
- 1 - NIO/NESA
- 1 - C/PES
- 1 - PDB Staff
- 1 - NID Staff
- 6 - CPAS/IMD/CB
- 1 - CPAS/ISS
- 1 - NIC/Analytic Group
- 1 - DO/NE
- 1 - DO/NE/AO
- 1 - D/NESA
- 1 - DD/NESA
- 1 - C/PPS
- 2 - NESA/PPS (one copy to analyst for sourcing)
- 1 - C/NESA/SO
- 1 - C/NESA/AI
- 1 - C/NESA/IA
- 1 - C/NESA/PG
- 1 - C/NESA/AI/I
- 1 - NESA/AI/I/Chrono
- 1 - NESA/AI/I/ [redacted]

DI/NESA/AI/I/ [redacted]

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